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THE FORTRESS OF LUCCA.

THE ancient kingdom of Grenada is one of the most mountainous and picturesque regions in all Spain. Green, beautiful valleys, lofty hills denuded of verdure, whose summits seem to reach the clouds, a sky intensely blue, castles built in Moorish days on craggy heights like eagles'-nests—all combine to make this country the most magnificent and attractive in the whole extent of Spanish territory. In some parts the rocks present the appearance of an immense amphitheatre, in others that of a gigantic staircase—mountains piled on mountains, with a winding road amid their threatening defiles, a road which here

time, when the Moors were in possession of the castle, and the banner of the crescent waved from its summit, Queen Isabella resolved to take the place by storm; how the Arab commander, well knowing the impregnability of his position, laughed in derision as he saw the Christians afar off; how the troops of Isabella became dispirited as they strove in vain, to reach the eyrie-citadel; but how, when their ardour was fading away, the holy Virgin herself appeared and led them on; how a road, unknown before, stretched itself out at their approaching footsteps, and made the way clear and acces-



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and there dwindles away into a narrow mule track, edged by a deep abyss, which one needs to pass under the guidance of a skilful muleteer. The fortress of Lucca is situated in the very heart of the mountain district. It occupies a high and conspicuous position. Glorious memories are awakened by a glimpse of its dismantled walls—stories of fierce war and tender love—of gallant deeds of arms which put to shame all modern Spanish heroism. There is a strange old legend connected with the castle, which the muleteer is well-nigh certain to relate as soon as he obtains a listener—how once upon a

sible to the very gates of the castle; how the Arab leader, when he saw the miracle, mounted his horse and fled, but alas! for him, fell over a precipice, and man and beast were dashed to pieces. In confirmation of the story the muleteer points out the miraculous road, a strange circuitous path that looks like a ribbon carelessly thrown down; draws attention to the strange marks, which may be taken for the impression of a horse's hoofs, on the side of a deep gulf; and leads the traveller to the ruined tower itself, that strange old remnant of the past, a fitting locality for the legend.